3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962,
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have initiated him into the full rights and responsibilities of adult manhood. The ceremony concludes with the appeal to the Monren hor, "We were black like crows, now we are white as white paddy-birds, you five men are our witnesses" (Campbell).

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Cicatrization (Sika)

The Santals have some marks looking like vaccination scars on their left-forearms, midway between the wrist and the elbow. These signs seen on the outer side of the forearm, contain an odd number of marks as one, three, five, or nine. It is customary for the male children to wear these *Sika* marks, and the ceremony is generally performed within their twelfth year.

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For cicatrization, they use a rag rolled to a thickness of about an inch and a half and shaped like a candle. An odd number of spots on the forearm are then spar upon, and the improvised candle is then made to stand on the saliva, which slowly burns and scalds the skin. The hands of the boy, who rolls in agony, are caught hold of by two men till the process is finished. Thereafter, the wound is healed by the application of a moss called *Sealom* (a fresh water Alga, *Mongeotea immersa*, West).

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If you question a Santal as to why they have an odd number of these marks, he will readily answer

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3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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881 304 [801] that the first sign means *Jiòn* (life) and the next *Mòròn* (death), the third *Jiòn* and the fourth *Mòròn* and so on. He does not, one can easily guess why, want to close with death. So he hits upon an odd number of *Sika* marks, which will ensure him "life".

[975] If this ceremony is not performed, the Santal believes that in his life hereafter, huge worms shaped like their giant drums (*tumdak'*)[1] will sit on his lap and eat him up. No particular religious ceremony, however, attends the *Sika*, which is confined to men only. The women generally wear tattoo marks on their palms, arms and some on their breasts.

Tattoo marks on women (or Khoda)

Santal women, in Mayurbhanj, generally wear several tattoo marks on wrists, near the end of their forearm and on the chest. As regards the nature of these marks, there is nothing special to the Santals to connect these with their traditional history, as has been traced concerning the Kharias. The characteristic common design was found to be that of the sun, amongst a variety of birds and other

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[534] 1 Ref. Tumdak', a kind of drum. The body of the drum is of burnt clay, the end beaten by the left hand is of bullock's hide, and that beaten by the right hand is of goat's skin, the whole is laced with strips of bullock's hide. (page 676, Dr. Campbell's *Santali to English Dictionary*.)

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It is worth noticing how the number "twelve" recurs in the traditions. Periods of twelve years are mentioned and twelve clans are named. Santal tradition is unanimous in talking of twelve clans, but there is little agreement about the names of the twelve. Santals using the clan suffix Ḍonka are unknown at the present day; local tradition says that they have changed their clan because of the odium attached to the murder of a monkey and the fact that they were reputed by some to sacrifice and eat monkeys. The conjecture of the narrator that the Ḍonka took the name of Bhaduli cannot be accepted. Two families in the area are known to have adopted the name Bhaduli, but they are members of a sub-clan of the Mạrṇḍi. One of the Bhaduli could relate little or nothing about the myths of his clan, but he remembered a song that celebrated an old quarrel between the Mạrṇḍi and the Kisku in which the former are referred to as Bhaduli and the latter as Koinḍa. The Bhaduli observe the same taboos as the rest of the Mạrṇḍi. P. O. Bodding gives the name of the lost clan as Bedea,[1] a title that is not known in the area. The great interest that Santals themselves take in the determination of these matters was well illustrated by a lively correspondence initiated by a number of educated Santals and carried on for some time during the year 1944 in the pages of the weekly paper *Pẹṛa Hoṛ*.[2]

The clans are exogamous and, with two exceptions, the members of one clan may marry a person belonging to any of the other clans. The first exception to the general rule prohibits a marriage between a Mạrṇḍi and a Kisku because of the quarrel in which these two clans were involved. The second prohibits the marriage of a Ṭuḍu and a Besra. The story behind this taboo was thus related by a member of the Ṭuḍu clan: "All twelve kinds of Ṭuḍu were exceedingly fond of dancing and singing, and they used to dance twelve dances in a single night. Well, one day two of the Ṭuḍu made a plan. Across the river from where they lived some girls of the Besra clan were engaged every day in grinding rice, and the youths thought to themselves: 'Tonight we shall get them out to dance the whole night through.' When they reached the river they found that it was in flood, and so they began to wonder how they would be able to get across. They walked along the bank looking out carefully till at last they found a creeping plant that stretched right across the river, its roots being on this side, while it was

[1] *Santali Dictionary*, Vol. IV, p. 396.
[2] Official organ of the Santal Mission of the Northern Churches, Dumka.

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son of the god Siva.[1] In one of the songs sung by the *Dāsāī* youths at Sarenga the first verses are as follows:

Which *guru* has a silver stick, sister, O sister,
In the middle of the Kasai river, sister, O sister,
The silver stick with a sound like tinkling bells?

Dhorom guru has a silver stick, sister, O sister,
In the middle of the Kasai river, sister, O sister,
The silver stick which sounds like tinkling bells.[2]

The mention of *Dhorom* as the first *guru* links *Dāsāī* lore with a god who is prominent in the cult of the earth mother, a cult that is common among the Hindu lower castes and among many of the Central India tribes, for whom the Dasserah is one of the important festivals of the year. The song proceeds to repeat the same question twelve times in all—the number twelve here again symbolizes completeness—and the answer is repeated with a different name each time. The names of the *gurus* as they are repeated at Sarenga are Dhorom, Siba (Siva), Kamru, Sidho, Gandu, Rohora, Bati, Buan, Lokhon, Bhadu, Ratu and Ramjit. The first eight names are mythical or symbolic, while the name Lokhon connects the song with local tradition, and Ramjit was the name of the last leader of the band before the present one. The names standing between these two also commemorate local *Dāsāī* leaders.

The practice by which *ojhas* are made today is informal and usually results from the attachment of a youth to an *ojha* as his servant for an unspecified period. There is a considerable amount of rivalry among the *ojhas*, who endeavour to steal a march on each other and especially to get hold of the powers of dead magicians. The following story, a literal translation of one that was current in the area, illustrates the nature of the power that they wield: "One day a man who had set out for his work in the jungle—he was a jungle keeper—saw three slender *sarjom* trees tied together and put down in the path at a cross-roads. He thought to himself: 'Now who could it be who was stealing trees from the jungle?' Saying this, he picked up the sticks and went on to the jungle. When he arrived there he thought: 'There is no need for me to carry these sticks round with me all the time; I will put them down here and pick them up when I am on my

[1] For a full discussion see Bodding, *Studies in Santal Medicine and Connected Folklore*, *Memoirs of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. X.
[2] See Appendix B, No. 15.